Earth Poems & Immersive Experiences

ECOSANITY

DAVID SPARENBERG

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David Sparenberg

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"David Sparenberg is a dreamer in the shamanic tradition, and an eco-poet in heart and soul… a dogma free seeker and latter-day troubadour."

Christa MacKinnon, author of Shamanism & Spirituality in Therapeutic Practice

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CANTO: the Rung of Ecocide

Here is a contemporary update on Dante's Inferno.
CANTO was previously published in OVI Magazine, EU.

We progressed until we reached the latest rung in the world's Inferno. There before us were two seething pits of new made hell, carved like gouged eye sockets in the fearsome, rude desolation of blind punishment.

The first of such was as a lake, thick and deep with blood. Over this body of violence an angry wind whipped in bursts of crazed fury and waved in rippling obscenities of gurgling cries, gagging groans and ugly screams of pleading agony. Awash in the blood thick muck, swilling and knotted into fist sized clumps, circulated currencies of all the world—some nations contributing more to the horror, while others less.

Into that reek of rancid death and death-made profits were condemned the souls of those who gained in life from crimes against humanity. And while these profiteers of genocide and war had been plunked down here to suffer consequence of avarice and injustice

by perpetual drowning, the common outcry of these ensanguined pirates was ego: "My life! My life! Give back **my** life! My profit-teering life!"

Near beside that fetid mess ranged the wound of the second sink hole, a noxious pool of black and percolating oil, inexhaustibly releasing methane bubbles in a foul and toxic stench with spewed out tar-balls riding the surface of the crude miasma.

Plunged headfirst into their viscid and suffocating bath, we watched the black rain of souls who in life betrayed and schemed and spread about in global contagions wide extinguishing denials, committing crimes against creation.

Even those who, bloated with arrogance and selfish greed—as if they mattered more than all life forms else—raped, poisoned and threatened Earth herself, dispensing the cancerous tumors of engineered epidemics, and extinctions.

There looking, I felt ashamed to be counted one of so malign a species, as my soul in shuddering pondered: Why have we waited for damnation, when it stood always within our common power to exact justice before our common danger?

(For year by year, myself and others out around the living sphere observed in trepidation how less and less of hell stayed hid beyond the grave, and more of hell was now and here.)

Thus, as I brooded on these heavy thoughts, the air before our horde congealed as if to glass. The glass, by smut and gloom grew dark, as if a sort of mirror. And in that horrid glass-reflective, my guide, myself, and others gathered at our sides, beheld ourselves for what we are—the latest demons of this place. Our clothes and skins on fire, our hairs in flames, the space above us weeping ashes, the space below us strewn with filth—and all because we held indifference precious, more valued than sustaining Earth herself.

FATHER SKY MOTHER EARTH

Previously published in Indie Shaman, UK

To Great Spirit Father who looks
Down from on high
To Great Spirit Mother who
Gives the ground whereon I stand.
I am here
Crying for a vision.

May all of creation reunite
In primal harmony
The violence of men
Come to an end
And may all of humanity
Return to life in balance.

I am standing here
On the Earth
Under the sun kissing Sky.
All around me life is teeming.
The sacredness of life
Is all around me.

The AGE of FLOWERS

Previously published in Countercurrents, India& Pagan Ireland

I am of flowers.
I came out from the butterfly.
I came out from the bee,
the dancing bee – the
hummingbird's feathered breast.

Once upon a time, a
long, long time ago,
the face of life was a flowers' face.
Flower perfume recited our song.
Flower petals inscribed our names
across deserts and grasslands.

At a time not
long from this time,
I will return to the Earth.
I will go back to butterfly.
I will go back to bee,
back to the dancing bee – the
hummingbird's feathered breast.

I will return to what Earth became
because of us,
out from the Age of Flowers. *

**The phrase, the Age of Flowers was learned from author-naturalist Loren Eisley. In The Immense Journey, Eisley wrote of the age of dinosaurs giving way to the increased metabolism of life forms in the eons long spread of flowers across the Earth. And of the planetary evolution that followed. From hummingbirds and pollenating bees to migratory herds and you and me.*

AMERGIN *

Previously published in Mythic Circle Magazine the Mythopoeic (JRR Tolkien) Society, USA

Heart of the deer
to a human heart.
Eye of the deer
to a human eye.
Song of the deer
to a human voice.
Dance of the deer
to human feet
to limbs and sinews and feet.
And to the soul of beauty
as a woman knows it
And to the soul of beauty
as a man may learn.

Heart of the stone
to human tenacity
to gravity and strength.
Memory of the stone
to human dreaming.
Story of the stone
in a field, on a road, submerged in a stream
story of stone

to the human sojourn.
And the chant of stone
to a human poem.
To vision and rhyme and rhythm of drum:
to sounding of the drum of the human soul.

Heart of the tree
to human courage.
Roots of the tree
to longevity.
To depths and the heights
that a seed can become. Branches
of tree
to human prayer.
Leaves of tree
to the seasons of love:
to the breath and sighs
and the tears and whispers.
And to the harp of human longing.

Heart of the dolphin
to a human heart.
Song of the dolphin
to mortal ecstasy.
Play of the dolphin

to human joy.
And the enchantment of dolphins
to human magic and melody.
To those, lucky, who are chosen
by waves and whales and reefs and sandy shore.
And by the depths of pipes of the ocean:
the fiddles and pipes of the ocean.

Heart
of the mist of time
to the human mind.
Heart
of the moon
to the human heart.
Heart of the sun
to the human soul.

Saint Patrick's Day 2020
**Amergin: the legendary first poet of Ireland*

TALKS

I talk to the stone
the talking stone
keeper of memory
in oral tradition
a bone
one memory-stone of evolving Earth.
And the stone talks to me.

I talk to the tree
the tree of ritual
my tree for hugging
lawful for reaching skyward
lawful for rooting deep
down into the intimate
mystery of Earth's fertility.
And the wisdom of the tree
talks to me.
I talk to wind
and the wind moves around
talking to the world
once with urgent fury
once more in breezy whispers
of audible feeling
And the moving wind
the Earth circling wind
talks to me.

I talk to water
with her mothering instinct
and with life bestowing power
and the water
from gatherings of rain
and rain
from the downpour of tears
desires
to be a blessings
desires cleanness
and to quench thirst.
And the water I talk to
the shining mirror
talks to me.

Because I am crazy
in this trance of voices
I am as sane as nature.
Because I am naturally sane
my heart is strong
my soul is rolling thunder.
And I am ennobled
by my talks with life.

A LOVE POEM

Previously published in THE POET, UK & Quail Bell, US

What if a person comes up
comes right up before another person
and says nothing
not a word, not a single word
certainly not the last word
seeks nothing, not craving
recognition, not needing
to impress, to make a point
score a point, to win
and certainly not a final point
certainly not a point of no return, triumph, domination
not to have done for,
not to go for, no
not to get from and not to take
not to bow down before or to sacrifice at
or even to gain favor from
even if only asking a small, almost
painless favor no
but merely a presence in the presence
of a person's otherness
breathing certainly

having heartbeat certainly
eye movements of course
quick or delicate, but
silent, breathing yet wordless, right
here and now in
the real context
of space and time, time
and space, how
might the silence feel
how would the silence
sound in a mere twinkling
in heart rhythms, say
with folded hands, composure, or open palms
and with naked feet – with smile
smile within the light aura of smiling
no posing, no, no faking, nothing
clever, unnatural, and nothing untrue…

swirled morning mist
and slow walking
a drop of dew
a dew-bead, rain
drop, a first drop of September rain
first snowflake alighting on winter
grass, first rose, rose-blush
kiss, pink-red and early green
topping a crown of
soft spring thorns.

How on Earth
could this happen
what on Earth
could make this wordless poem
possible, how could the event
occur reaching down, touching
tenderly, awakening awareness
unafraid, bringing life
out unashamed, as shadowless
as wordless, trusting and trusted
with nothing said
not a word, not a single blessed word
worried to be spoken - only
a silent presence in the
presence of another person's silence
in that hush, this glow – What
after all the tussle and distress
after all the furrowed brows
the breakings off, confusions, insecurities, stammering
is love—Love!
What is love?
What is silence? Show me….

ENIGMA

Previously published in The Mythic Circle & Green Egg Journal, US

He had no hands.
Which was to say
he had hands but they were crippled

He had no eyes.
Which was to say
he had eyes but they were blind.

He was not straight.
His back was humped, he
was clubfooted.
When he walked he
defied gravity
and clumped along unevenly, rocking
left to right, right to left
from side to side.

He had no ears.
Which was to say
he had two ears
in the usual human places.
But he was deaf –
the creature could not hear.

Anyone would think
he was bitter and sullen
and fatally poisoned
by venomous rage. But not so!
Not even a bit
not a single iota.

With his crippled hands
he prayed.
With his blind eyes
he dreamed
blue, gray, burning crimson, sepia and
an occasional warmth of
interior candles. With
his deaf ears he listened to stories
perfect children had never heard
and could not hear.

His lugubrious mouth
laughed at what he could not see, sang
songs from
operas of his imagination - strange
melodies he could only feel. Sometimes
singing made him cry. Sometimes it made
him turn his soiled, wrinkled face toward the sun.
-

The voice he could not hear
resonated a bell in his bulk - intimately
repeating in his beating heart.

He did not know he was
off canter and hunchbacked
when he danced – pathetic and ugly in
the sight of others
repulsed, fascinated
while observing him, looking
down, watching at a distance.

He knew nothing of
human cruelty
in his ragdoll sojourn.
In the merry-agony, ecstasy
of his soul
he had no shadow.

HUMILITY: a Poem to the EARTH

Previously published in Our Changing Earth Anthology, vol. 1UK

i commit to love you
unworthy that i am

i have sat in tall native grass
looking out across waters
i have watched
the setting sun

always
always i commit to love you
to love *you*
unworthy that i am

i have walked poetic through
flowering meadows
more than once a
red-tailed hawk
circled over trees, circled
in rings of scouting observation
above my head

i have traveled narrow
quiet paths of
evergreen woods, old
growth and saplings peopling
endangered forests
i have followed the
mountain watercourses
of plunging waterfalls

always
always
i commit to love you, to
love *you*
unworthy that i am
when my time comes
to say good-bye, as
my time must
let it be a lover's farewell
not haunted anxiety
not bitterness – not
howling disappointment and
certainly not despair

my heart rains tears
over those who
harm you – many
are crowded here carelessly,
numb, diminished
and sleepwalking
and many too
are arrogantly hoarding
takers always
taking without reciprocity

when my time comes
to say good-bye
let it be a lover's farewell our
season's gentle reconciliation
flesh
and bones and energy recycling

i am giving all that i am
to the miracle of life
returning this humility
this courage the
experiences of adventure
and the open nature
of human adoration and
the episodic artistry
of the human soul

always
always
always and always
i commit to love you
to love *You*

birthplace of life, Blessed
Earth – unworthy Yes…
unworthy that i am

POWER SONG #1

Previously published in The Fate of Poets, OVI eBooks

Song
song sung in a whisper on a hillside in morning
song in twilight, midnight
song sung to a candle cradled
in darkness, song
before the silhouette of a tree
tracing the watermarks of a tide
washed stone, song for the mortal
heart when heart is weary, song
for the human soul when soul is
lonely, or the soul is lost
song for these bones, under skin, flesh
inside a breathing, blood warmed body;
song
song not to be sad, not forlorn
not to be wounded always, hopeless
of healing, a healing song
sung for recovery, for going on, for
the sense to awaken, arise

before danger comes near, to
speak, to abide with the pain of the
world without breaking, and to feel, freely
without numbing fear.
Song
song of a thousand generations, gathering
coming, going on the pilgrimage
Earth: sacred song, song of sanity, song
of peace—song of a power dreamer
standing in the lotus of creation.

POWER SONG #2

Previously published in OVI magazine (EU)

Song that remembers there are tides
Song that remembers there are orphans
Song to the heights of trees, beyond trees to the heights of clouds
Song to mountain summits
Song to the mists and greens and roots of valleys;

Song that names the lonely, that remembers generations forgotten
Song that calls and cries and sends forth greetings to the forlorn and forsaken
to the falling and the fallen;

Song of rainbows and of seasons—of oceans and of seasons
Song first sung among ancestors
Song that holds life precious—Sacred Song
Song of courage and of laughter
Song that cannot be stopped
Song that is mortal but eludes death
Song to be sung from rooftops, in meadows, at cradles and gatherings hereafter;

Song of powers once were
Song of powers through lovers come ‘round
Song of crystal, song of water, song of fire, passing on from me to you
Song to be given to children
Song to be taught to outcasts and orphans
Song of avatars, song of warriors, song of flowering children;

Everywhere out over the Earth-song
Everywhere out across the sky
Song that is sun’s liturgy
Song that the changing moon recites
Bardic Song, song of pilgrims and pilgrimages, of passages and faces;

Song that is sung by Buddha—Buddha Song
Song danced to by Christ in the cosmic round dance; the same song of renewal
the same song of resurrection

Song never departed
Song forever returned
This song that Rumi chants in the electric tavern of ecstasy
This song
from the rose bleeding lips of Juan de la Cruz
This song
from the eternal palms of Saint Francis
This song that I pass to you in passage;
Song of heritage
Song of legacy
Song sung
out over the Earth – song sung
across the sky;

Song for all in need of shelter—nourishment and shelter
Song for all in need of caressing—embraces and caressing
Song for all in need of cleansing and of culture
Song for all in need of kissing—Kiss Song: Touch
Song that bestows many blessings
Song never owned by any, belonging to none, open to all
Song
out over the Earth
Song
across the sky.

THIS IS - And This Is Everything

Previously published in OVI Magazine, EU,
& Gatherings: Journal of Ecopsychology, USA

Look
I am here
This is my life
Pain and sorrow
All
Love and joy
All
Wandering and discovery
Loss and recovery
Look I am standing

Look I am walking
Light Earth-walker
Reality is roundness
Circles surround me
Passions and patterns
Spiritual powers

Dance of creation
Creation dances
Drum of creation
Creation drums
Syncopation
Of rhythmic hearts
The meeting
Of your heart with mine

Passing away
Ever returning
Never before
Forever hereafter!

Out over the Earth
We go walking
Out over the Earth
We go dreaming
*We are nature dreaming**

Out over the Earth
We go praying.
Circles surround us.
Earth is a life place.

**Paraphrase of Robinson Jeffers from The Beauty of Things*

RITUAL at the Merlin Tree

Previously published in Mythic Circle Magazine& Quail Bell, US

Here is the place of the Merlin Tree
Here is the place of becoming family
Known as the Ring of Gathering

Here people stand in circle
Here we join hands
Faces bright with dawn sun
Faces beam from changing moon

Here people dance a circle dance
Here people sing to Earth and Sky

Here is the place of memory
Here we are happy- becoming family
Here in the place of the Merlin Tree.

INEVITABLE

Previously published in Quail Bell

secure to arrive
securely departing
evening twilight

things recede
into deepening shades and shadows

in her own time
inevitable night
if sky is crowded
with quilts of clouds
night will but be of
darkened grays

if sky is clear
a blue-black infinity

among budding branches
the moon blossoms
scattered wicks
of cosmic snowflakes

REMEMBER LAHAINA

Previously published in Quail Bell (US)
Countercurrents, India & OVI, EU

Those with holes
instead of eyes
do not see.
They are blind.

Those with holes
instead of ears
do not hear.
They are deaf.

Emotionally numb
devoid of empathy
they are sleepwalking.
The walking dead.

Remember Lahaina
(island of Maui):
hurricane winds
Hawaiian drought
climate- fire
and the seaside town, now
but ashes of memory.

Remember Lahaina.

If we do not change
our values of identity
if we do not work in unison
to change direction
civilization will fall apart
eco-structures
(bio-laws of nature)
continue to collapse.

Choices
have consequences.
setting a course
defining our species future.

Remember Lahaina.

TEARS

Previously published in Countercurrents, India

I am speaking with you.
We are talking together,
speaking of ordinary things,
using ordinary words.
It is good talk too.

The everyday is as much at
risk as the light of the sky
and as angels, robed in
feathers, of heaven.

On that note, I
wish to speak with you
in soul-talk, to
talk in my native tongue, to
watch the changes
come into your eyes, see
how much we are yet
kindred and how seriously we are lost and
how pitifully and profoundly longing
we are broken – with how much
we have forgotten

with how little we dare
remember from the raw
pre-dawn adventure of
being alive
of being human.

When I talk in this manner I
am truly at home, deep
in my garden, my
orchard, my wilderness without borders
and my wild.

When salmon in the eclipse of summer
swim upstream,
the journey is fate and
fate is arduous. Whether there is
comfort or not, I
do not know. I know that
the work is strenuous and
necessary. I,
in the language of Earth dreaming,
am fish and stream
and the strength and beauty of swimming.

When the white owl wings
silently across the fields of
freshly fallen snow, when
my soul is attuned to creation,
I am one with flight and all – the
owl, the silence, the light-milk-moon
blessing the frosted night of
prayers and dancing.

When I talk like this, my friend
I may well forget my
name and who I am and
feel myself arced and
shining as a rainbow over
lush green island mountains,
over the blue mirroring ocean.

I may find
comfort in the childhood of
spring grass, the soft, waking up smell
of rain on summer earth, my
joy in the breeze of autumn leaves.

And if you hear me, feel
me in your poetic hearing, there
lives a chance for us, something vibrant
between us to hope together, yet,
on the hurt Earth,
the hurt and welcoming Earth.
In our agony, in our hurt.

TRAUMA

Previously published in Countercurrents. India
OVI Magazine, EU& The POET, UK

House:
house made of wood
is on fire.
Fiery winds
blow our ashes away.
Burning forests
and the grasslands.

House:
house made of clay.
Raging waters
wash towns away.
Death by drowning
the epic ooze.
House of storms
house of stars
without a roof
without foundation.
Children of thirst
frail with hunger.
Dreamers not dreaming
the haven of dreams.

This is the
House of Lamentations.
This is not the House of Dawn.
This is a house
of wailing agony.
It is not an aviary
of twittering birds.

Time is contorted
by dreadful changes.
Seasons are shadowed
in fatal warnings.
House of
Chaos: hope is dying.

Smells of death
pollute the air.
Sights of death
in the surging flood.

THE DAY ARRIVED

Countercurrents. India,& OVI Magazine, EU

The day (once more)
when the world as we know it stopped
the Doomsday Clock, barely
in the nick of time, stood still
the power of political death over
individual life ended, the
civilization
of greed and ego and violence
collapsed
returning to dust.

Not because
somebody, supernaturally, descended
from the clouds, not because
the sea miraculously parted.
The event happened
(happened again and is happening still)
because a little child
held a blossoming flower
in innocent hands. A
flower (a child)
as precious and sublime
as the breath of life.

The new beginning began
because a mother
breastfed her infant. In
quiet security she sang a
mothering lullaby
of the continuum
of the sanctity of life.

The turning point arrived
(arrived again and is arriving still)
when a young man and
a young woman stood up
courageously together, proclaiming:
"No! No more!
Enough is enough!"

Making heard
making felt **The**
No that is The Yes
to justice, the worth of a
single individual, the
priority of life over death – over
political death
and tyranny – hateful
ideology
and the too frequent
dehumanizing
world obliterating Nought
the Day denying
reign of terror, the endless
Night of War.

THREADS

Previously published in OVI Magazine,EU

Possibly
somebody lived another day
because
an old man
stood on a hill
because dawn light shone on his face
the
wind played in his hair
because
he spoke a word
not intended for hearing

because a
woman
dreamed of her lover
a
gull flew over the ocean

an oak
dropped an acorn in the snow
Possibly
because
an old man
stood on a hill
because
an infant cried
because a
mother offered her breast
death was held in check
love
became a taste
freedom
wore a smile
and the world did not end

THE HUMAN PROMISE

Previously published in The POET, UK

When the Human Promise shut her eyes
she saw what was unseen – heart
of the human heart – soul
of the human soul. Light
like the softness of flowers shone
around everyone whose task in
life was truth and within
every deed done for sake of the
goodness of life. Keeping the Possible open.

When she opened her mouth
a river flowed out
joining the ocean of light. In
the melodious waters of
life a river of fire
turned pain into smoke. Anguish
of cruelty was washed to ashes.

When the Human Promise opened her eyes
she saw the person beside her
simple and smiling and
quietly responding in talk of peace – a
sounding of intimate dialogue, spontaneously
ignited between them and us
with the freedom of laughter.

Eyes of concord shone
with a poem of letting go
in poetry of belonging, letting
be. Poems repeated, chanted
to keep the Possible open.

When the Human Promise opened
her heart
thorns that had been the
source of suffering
became roses. Every rose
flowered into a tree of life. Every
tree took root
in a cornucopia of compassion. Compassion's
fruit is justice. The fruit-seeds fall
onto the grounds of salvific orchards.

Rivers meander gently, slowly, natively
unobstructed through valleys of
black soil. Sun has become the tenderest lover.

Those who but sought
power amid trash amid trinkets knotted
in the clasp of death were
surrendered to death. Those who built
tabernacles in the wilderness of
love gathered at the prayers of life.

Allegiance holds fast
to bring love home at last -at last!
to the scorned and the scorched and the homeless Earth.

LISTEN to LIFE

Previously published by The POET, UK
and with OVI Magazine

My heart beats.
Hearts of all living on the Earth
beat too.
Isn't the beating heart of Earth
Can't the pattern rhythms
(of resonant drumbeats—listen) be
felt throughout creation's
integral vastness?
Isn't there a unified
pulse of life?
I breathe.
All living creatures throughout the
Earth now are breathing too.
Isn't Earth herself
inhaling, exhaling
sorrow and joy
agony and delight
anger, longing and a keenness
of belonging, keening—bonded
in cycles of metamorphic transitions?

In the Here and Now we
who are alive are
all breathing. Air is air.
Water is water. We live by
air and water. And moon
with stars cross the seasonal skies. Night
cannot shut these orbits out! Sun
brings warmth and
light to returning days.

Stop!
Give attentive thanks
to force of blessings encompassing
and sustaining life.
Listen to life…

I am part of all that is.
Heaven is vertically
above me.
Earth is beneath my feet. Horizontally
Earth surrounds me.
Heaven and Earth pathfinding
directions by a spiritual compass
navigate within me instinctively.
I stand in the Open before
the intimate immensity of

Being's grandeur.
I am a miniature of grandeur
a smallness of immensity, an evolution
of intimacy. Looking
to see, I live. Listening
to hear, I live.
All that is
is part of me.

If someone curiously
with good intention
questions me, "Where
does this beginning begin? When
does the endless end?" I can
dance or sing or laughs. I can
make a poem
out of dreams or ecstasy
and out of love and courage
giving voice
to my reply. All that is
is gifted
with voice and language.
Listen…
Spring Equinox, 2021

MY ECO LIST

Previously published in The POET, UK
& Deep Green Resistance News Service

This is not lifeless Saturn
or Jupiter, the Moon, Venus, or Mars.
Because a neighboring planet is
named for a Roman goddess
does not mean that
women originate there as if from
an unearthly temple of extraterrestrial love.
Because another is named
for a Roman god
does not prove that men are
hard wired and destined for war.

Here is Earth.
Earth is a Life Place.
We live here, only, always
within a context of
others also living.

Learn again
to live appropriately with
realities
of the changing Earth.
Clear your head

(if you cannot
blow your mind) open your heart
reintroduce your suffering
soul to the intricate
complexities of creation.
Initiate relationships.

Buy less, yes.
Possess less, use less.
Embrace
the Prosperity of Appreciation.
Do not regret
what you give up
rejoice instead
in who you save.

Defend diversity.
Cultivate maturity.
Renounce violence.
One imminent need is
to democratize our
ability to respond to
realities and
discern difference between
false and genuine needs.

Another imminent necessity
is to advance "mustard seeding."
Transition from the solitude of awakening
into a solidarity of commitment. Note
that instead of transcendence
I am favoring imminence and
the dynamic constancy
of transitional movement.
An ancient modality.
Don't let the garden you
cultivate become overly tame!

Magic of the here and now
is participatory art and natural science.
Magic of the metamorphic
empowers dreams and reverent
dread as well as excitation
of awe-inspiring wonder.

Make choices
that are Acts of Beauty
choices for seven generations.
Embody delight. Be amorous
with circles. Consciously, conscientiously
joyously: evolve! evolve! evolve!
Attend
a Council of All Beings.
Think
like a mountain or
at least your favorite
tree. Envy
pollen dusted
busy working bees.
Sing with whales. Whales
are profound singers!

EDWARD ABBEY*

Previously published in OVI, Countercurrents & the Deep Green Resistance News Service (DGRNS)

Edward Abbey
park ranger
desert solitary
author – avatar
of beautiful
traumatized Earth
wrote to us
with a pine needle
with tip of the tail
of a gopher snake,
"there is a kind of
poetry, even a kind
of truth
in simple facts."

a pinyon jay
on shaded ground
a chickadee
on a swaying branch
a leaf, a bud
greens of moss
atop a stone

salmon struggling
to swim upstream
some exhausted and
dying - others already dead
lifeless bodies with jutted jaws
littering banks, awash
afloat in micro-currents
the stench of decomposing fish

a bald eagle
topping a towering tree, an
autumn leaf curled
and brittle, suspended in midair
by a single spider-thread
twirling this way
twirling that
at every wayward puff of wind
the felt-sound of
flapping raven wings

rowdy winds
rough waters
out over the Salish Sea
a resident
orca pod patrolling

Puget Sound - the powerful
beauty of their black and
white sleek bodies
the magnitude
of Mount Rainier
crashing flush
of Snoqualmie Falls
full autumn moon

closer to my shadow
my face
than the infinite field
of clustered stars

a nectar-sucking
hummingbird, a
pollenating bumblebee
a ladybug
the liquid drum of
rain - drizzle or downpour
the curious
composure of squirrels
with small, folded hands
sensitive, flicking tails and
their sudden, scampering, agility
multiple
pleasures of solitude

pressure of sunlight, air
cupped by human palms, lines
interior of the human hand

Edward Abbey
park ranger
desert solitary
author – avatar
of beautiful
traumatized Earth
wrote to us
on a red tail hawk's feather
on a swirl
of drought dry dust
"not a silence
as much
as a great stillness…
surrounding
overwhelming peace…
a suspension of time
a constant presence."

Earth
Nature
Natural Earth
this spinning
blue ball in space

land lapped unendingly
by encircling oceans
the Life Place
Earth - Home!

Abbey
in his wonder
stopped to
write to us.
and do we feel
the pathos of his sanity
allow his voice entrance
emotions more
than the vacuum and vacancies
in crowded, denatured heads?
Can we learn still?
Change? It is
late, if not too late.
Be truthful about commitment:
Is it too late?

How many heartbeats
how many breaths
in the mere span
of 90 seconds! **
Edward Abbey calls out
amid the ruins of civilization
against completing
planetary ruination,
"Long live
diversity
Long
live the Earth."

***Edward Abbey,** American naturalist/ environmentalist, author of the contemporary eco-classic **DESERT SOLITAIRE**. Quotations from Abbey are taken from this book. ****Reference is to the **Doomsday Clock** currently set at 90 seconds before midnight.

ROCK

Published in Quail Bell, USA

home in a meadow
on a forest floor
within a stream
along a clear lake shore, waiting
waiting for a hand to come
to life up
to turn around
turn over
beside a crooked, narrow path
beside a wending
unpaved road
– a roadside rock

awaiting
bison, deer
mountain lion
wolf, badger, heavy bear
goat, the
elegant horse or
the elegant horse…
the wild, fleet, elegant horse or
human footprints (curiosities
of the human face)

a sentient touch
and elevated (upright)
breath and perception
rock

remembering
diversities
diversities, changes
evolution
evolutionary ages – geo-history
of spinning Earth
sacredness
talking, listening
listening and talking
to and with
to and fro, divinity
of Earth - Earth
life's place
cradling, caressing
nesting Earth - rock

an altar of belonging
cosmic formed
weather carved

pressed, compressed, compacted
homing
in a meadow
on a forest floor
in a clear water stream
water
along a lake's
pellucid shore
salted-soft
in bubbling waves, rippling
in breathing tide
waterstone
…rock…

SEASONS

a time to forget
and a time to remember
a time to forgive
but not all is forgivable
a time to ascend
and a time to descend
a time to struggle
and a time for peace
to rest the restless
mind and heart

a time to avoid
the spider bite of bitterness
a time to invite
a butterfly kiss
time to say no
to the scorpion's tail
the dragon scale of hatred
and contempt
the torment of obscene hatred
and the bone chilling cold
of contempt
time too

to survive the indifference
of society
and the blistering
heat of ideological politics.

time to tell a lover
with a sigh, in the nightingale
grotto of twilight
"For one who all but
died in the desert of loneliness
an oasis is a prayer of life."

time for some rites of happiness
time for some wilderness ecstasy
time to light a candle
at the onset of uncertain night
and time to watch the unclouded
October silhouette
at the rising of the moon

a time to write a poem
when words matter most
and a time for wordless poetry

DIGNITY

dignity of having arrived
at the evolutionary status
of the human being – Troubadour of the Earth
of the sparrow
and the sundry other fowl
sermonized by Francis of Assisi
of wild meadow flowers and wilderness
the lily of the field
and the glamour of the rose – the
rose blush mood

dignity of the lamb
the mountain ram
the cougar the fleet gazelle
the elegant smooth muscled horse
the fierce tiger the bison (Ta Tanka)
and the hare

dignity of the whale
in the ocean deep
of the orca hunting
in the orca pod
of the trailing wolf
in the wolf pack moon
of eagle gleaming gold
in the summer sunlight between
clouds of owl
in the branches of winter midnight
and the silent shadow gliding above windless snow

dignity of the butterfly
the flame wedded moth
of ladybug
and the proletariat bee
of the busker cricket
and the busker on the corner
with her nimble fingers her magic
fiddle and her fiery agile fiddle bow

the dignity of play
and of care and of prayer
and of laughter
the politics of joy and laughter
of a Brooklyn Francis gray-haired
scattering breadcrumbs for pigeons
and a mother snuggling
her newborn infant in the caress
of her lullaby

and the dignity of having arrived getting
to the evolutionary status
dynamic of the human being – troubadour
for sake of the Earth – the dignity
of being here
in the Circle of Life

SWANS

Seated among trees this late November day, I think of Yeats' poem The Wild Swans of Coole: *"Upon the brimming water among the stones/Are nine-and-fifty swans/ The nineteenth autumn has come upon me/Since I first made my count;/I saw, before I had well finished/All suddenly mount/And scatter wheeling in great broken rings/Upon their clamorous wings./I have looked upon those brilliant creatures/ And now my heart is sore./ All's changed since I, hearing at twilight/The first time on this shore/The bell-beat of their wings above my head/Trod with a lighter tread."**

Now I think of the current report of swans across Europe dying mysteriously, spinning in circles with bleeding nostrils, before dropping in macabre death throes into water or onto dry ground. There is no mystery in this for me. I have puzzled out the mounting deaths of delicate and beautiful things.

Heaving a heavy sigh, I imagine next angels falling lifeless in scatterings and mounds across continents with every betrayal by violence, every crime against creation by human ignorance. Their fragile, fading forms of light buried, unseen by all but the rarest poets and children in their tender years, as many fallen angels as the leaves of autumn.

**From The Collected Poems of WB Yeats, edited by Richard J. Finneran, Collier/Macmillan*

PRAYER of the ANIMALS

Previously published in the final issue of
Shaman's Drum Magazine

Our kin
who now possess the land
where once we roamed,
plentiful and free,
lead us not into extinction,
but deliver us from the devouring
dis-ease of human greed.

Give us this day
(even unto the seventh generation)
a belonging-place to be
what we are, and in harmony
with All Our Relations.

For yours is the power
to restore or further destroy
the Sacred Hoop of Creation.

Make a warrior's choice
by honoring unity in diversity
of the Great Mystery.
Let Spirit guide you
back to Creator's vision-dream:
We Are All One Family.

The WATER

The Water says to me,
I am here to bathe you
in mothering tears
to quench your thirst
with mountain rain.

I wish you to learn
how to wash your hands
to wash your face.
How to go on living
in vision and purity.

If disloyal to yourself
you will betray us both.

She says,
When sunlight overcomes me
I am gold
in the flow of a long journey.
When moon comes down to caress
I am silver
in the ocean of moon's melody.

The Water speaks quietly
she says to me,
When I am serene
scarcely a breathing ripple
I am a mirror
for eyes of your soul.

Do not neglect to look
into the mirror of origins.
Do not fail to see
with the eyes of your soul.

Because I love you,
I wish you to feel
what dawn is doing
and the dew.
I wish you to hear
what Earth is saying.

If you do not heed
the plea of the Earth
we will end in tragedy.

In DARK NIGHT of the SOUL

As you seek
You are sought
As you touch
You are touched

Light
Light that is no light
Light seen

Voice
Voice that is no voice
Voice heard

Movement
Without motion
Word
Wordlessly spoken

Presence
Beyond person
Person
Of pure presence
Presence
Without shadow

Touch
Touch
Without touching
Touch
Of pure ecstasy

A LINE ACROSS TIME

If you are a believer (whatever the specifics of your faith, which is to say, your way of trust beyond mere facts and circumstance) and you look at the human world, and see the world is confused, broken, often crushed, oppressed by cruelty, corruption and suffering, you will ask, *"What is God waiting for?"*

I will respond to this question. The question is not rhetorical. It is the voice of the soul arising from the depths of a unique human capacity. The response therefore should not be an abstraction to play mind games with. The response, to be a genuine response, needs to be of the same dimension and integrity as the question itself.

God is waiting for you. And for me. God has always been waiting for us. The fullness of our humanity. And the truth of this abundance, this plenum and Earth based maturity, pronounced as humanity's prophetic promise, is our truth. A dynamic and wholly human truth. And it is nearer The Gospel of Thomas than to Nietzsche's Zarathustra.

I will reframe the question. Looking at the human world, seeing the world confused, broken, disillusioned by corruption, cruelty and suffering, I ask, what are we doing to make change happen? What are you doing? What am I? What is today's excuse for indifference? What for delay? Or to extend (perpetuate) denial?

When will enoughreally be enough? When will we collectively draw a line across time, a line for redefining our future, and say to Evil, *"You shall not pass!"*

AMONG the TREES

Published on the back cover of the April 2025 (final issue) of Indie Shaman Magazine, UK

She invited me to walk with her
Into the forest.
She invited me to sit with her
Among the trees.
She spoke to me of patterns.
And the poetry of flowers.
She showed me shapes in miniature
I had not seen before.

She told me there are no
Accidental meetings.
Choices choose direction
And direction becomes destiny.
She invited me to meditate on greenness
On life and love and light and laughter.
She invited me to pray with her.
And I did.

EARTH DAY *

Previously published in Countercurrents, India &
with Medium (for the Indivisible Network), USA

Today
is my day of renouncement.
Today I renounce
things and thingness
of the It World.
And the dehumanizing power
of things to
use and rule over me:

the car
the cellphone
the computer
the clock
the television

artificial intelligence
and the gun

the manipulated
stock market and cryptocurrency
all things designed; things sold
to obsess, to diminish, degrade
and to possess me.

Today is Earth Day.

Today
is my day of renouncement
(and denouncement).
Today I renounce
all ideologies of
deception and betrayal
(betrayal of the generative Earth
and betrayals of evolutionary life)
the politics of racism
outlier exclusions (deportations)
based on birth origins
on the colors of people's skin
(those who submit to inequality
or those who resist injustice.)

Today
I renounce hatred, blind rage
and blind fear
the deafness of fear
the criminal tolerance
of intolerance
and the complicity
of criminal silence.

Today I denounce
authoritarianism
elitism, oligarchy
tyranny
totalitarian oppression
and slavery, every in-practice
insidious deformation of slavery.
And always, always, always
always I renounce violence. Violence
and the patriarchal gun. Violence
and vengeance.

Today
I denounce and I
renounce systems made to
reduce human dignity
to reduce you
to reduce me
our neighbors and strangers
to nameless numbers
to zombies of the State
to a Borg of the Hive

Today
this day is Earth Day!

Today I affirm
and I am gratitude in person.
Because I am here
I am alive.
Life is everywhere
always all around me:
diversity of creatures
in motion, blessings
of deep-rooted trees
wind dancing grasses, perpetual
waves of the pendulum
ocean: sea lions
lions of the sea
forests of kelp, coral
and great blue whales

atmosphere, the
complex, mixing chemistry of
the air we breathe
the fertile soil
beneath our feet
sky of light

over our heads
the infinite
Van Gogh poetry and
wheeling ecstasy of
stars of cosmic night

my senses (my imaging
way to feel and see)
this sense of wonder All
Around we share. This
Earth is where life is. Life
happens here (wild bubbling
bio-cauldron.) constantly.
Constantly.

Today
this
day
every breath and minute
every hour
every day of
every season
on every continent naturally
in the democracy of experience
is Earth Day! Humility.

***Written on Earth Day, 22 April 2025*

HAPPENING

Previously published in Countercurrents, India

Out of a seed in the ground
comes a flower. Miracle!
Out on the branch of a tree
come blossoms in spring.
Out from the blossoms fruit grows
delighting senses.
And an offering of food.

Out of a woman's opening womb
a child is born. New life!
The complex miracle
of a human journey.
Out from parted lips
breath of a living voice
come songs of love.

Out of a generous soul
a heart with wings ascends.
Prayers and passions
of light and fire.
Out from spontaneities of joy
the blush of roses
come miracles of peace

ALTAR

Go ahead
take your shoes off
walk an unfamiliar road
move among people
who do not know you
who speak a different language
who practice different customs

When the people watch you
look back at them

Afterward
they will build a shrine on the spot
where you stopped to pray
They will name it
Shrine of the Wanderer

Take up a smooth stone, native
to the place
paint with your finger
in ink of the blood
of the last dragon
three simple words
only these words:
No War Hereafter

The people will remember
their children will dance in rings
on your feast day
The people will place the painted stone
in the Shrine of Remembrance
They will name the stone
the Altar of Peace

The HOLY GREEN of TIME *in honor of Tom Bombadil*

Previously published in Mythic Circle Magazine, The Mythopoeic/JRR Tolkien Society, USA

After the longest
Night
Dawn.

After the longest
Winter
Spring.

After the longest
fear
and loss
and sorrow
the bursting out
of Joy.

After the longest
dark, lingering
and imposing shadows
Light.

Faces flourish.
Flowers blossom.
An April robin
in new grass. The
Holy Green of Time. A
pollen dusted
honeybee….

Gratitude
is in bloom:
Rejoice!

Ecosanity
Earth Poems & Immersive Experiences

David Sparenberg

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Earth Poems & Immersive Experiences

ECOSANITY

DAVID SPARENBERG

David Sparenberg is a humanitarian & eco-poet, international essayist & storyteller. Along with this volume, David is also author of the **OVI eBook In Search of Thomas Paine.** He is an advocate for democracy, nonviolence and planetary responsibility. David lives in the Pacific Northwest of the United States.